

(3) Ensuring that ENs only refer an individual to a State VR agency for services pursuant to an agreement regarding the conditions under which such services will be provided.

(4) Resolving a dispute between an EN and a State VR agency with respect to agreements regarding the conditions under which services will be provided when an individual is referred by an EN to a State VR agency for services.

#### EVALUATION OF PROGRAM MANAGER PERFORMANCE

##### § 411.250 How will SSA evaluate a PM?

(a) We will periodically conduct a formal evaluation of the PM. The evaluation will include, but not be limited to, an assessment examining the following areas:

- (1) Quality of services;
- (2) Cost control;
- (3) Timeliness of performance;
- (4) Business relations; and
- (5) Customer satisfaction.

(b) Our Project Officer will perform the evaluation. The PM will have an opportunity to comment on the evaluation, and then the Contracting Officer will determine the PM's final rating.

(c) These performance evaluations will be made part of our database on contractor past performance to which any Federal agency may have access.

(d) Failure to comply with the standards used in the evaluation may result in early termination of our agreement with the PM.

#### Subpart E—Employment Networks

##### § 411.300 What is an EN?

An employment network (EN) is any qualified entity that has entered into an agreement with us to function as an EN under the Ticket to Work program and assume responsibility for the coordination and delivery of employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services to beneficiaries who have assigned their tickets to that EN.

##### § 411.305 Who is eligible to be an EN?

Any qualified agency or instrumentality of a State (or political subdivision thereof) or a private entity that assumes responsibility for the coordi-

nation and delivery of services under the Ticket to Work program to disabled beneficiaries is eligible to be an EN. A single entity or an association of or consortium of entities combining their resources is eligible to be an EN. The entity may provide these services directly or by entering into an agreement with other organizations or individuals to provide the appropriate services or other assistance that a beneficiary with a ticket may need to find and maintain employment that reduces dependency on disability benefits. ENs may include, but are not limited to:

(a) Any public or private entity, including charitable and religious organizations, that can provide directly, or arrange for other organizations or entities to provide, employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services.

(b) State agencies administering or supervising the administration of the State plan approved under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 720 *et seq.*) may choose, on a case-by-case basis, to be paid as an EN under the payment systems described in subpart H of this part. For the rules on State VR agencies' participation in the Ticket to Work program, see subpart F of this part. The rules in this subpart E apply to entities other than State VR agencies.

(c) One-stop delivery systems established under subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2841 *et seq.*).

(d) Alternate participants currently operating under the authority of section 222(d)(2) of the Social Security Act.

(e) Organizations administering Vocational Rehabilitation Services Projects for American Indians with Disabilities authorized under section 121 of part C of title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 750 *et seq.*).

(f) Public or private schools that provide VR or employment services, conduct job training programs, or make services or programs available that can assist students with disabilities in acquiring specific job skills that lead to employment. This includes transition programs that can help students acquire work skills.

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(g) Employers that offer job training or other support services or assistance to help individuals with disabilities obtain and retain employment or arrange for individuals with disabilities to receive relevant services or assistance.

### **§411.310 How does an entity other than a State VR agency apply to be an EN and who will determine whether an entity qualifies as an EN?**

(a) An entity other than a State VR agency applies by responding to our Request for Proposal (RFP), which we published in the Commerce Business Daily and which is available online through the Federal government's electronic posting system (<http://www.eps.gov>). This RFP also is available through SSA's website, <http://www.ssa.gov/work>. Since recruitment of ENs will be an ongoing process, the RFP is open and continuous. The entity must respond in a format prescribed in the RFP announcement. In its response, the entity must assure SSA that it is qualified to provide employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services to disabled beneficiaries, either directly or through arrangements with other entities.

(b) The PM will solicit service providers and other qualified entities to respond to the RFP on an ongoing basis. (See §411.115(k) for a definition of the PM.) The PM will conduct a preliminary review of responses to the RFP from applicants located in the PM's service delivery area and make recommendations to the Commissioner regarding selection. The Commissioner will decide which applicants will be approved to serve as ENs under the program.

(c) State VR agencies must comply with the requirements in subpart F of this part to participate as an EN in the Ticket to Work program. (See §§411.360ff).

(d) One-stop delivery systems established under subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2811 *et seq.*) may participate in the Ticket to Work program as ENs and do not need to respond to the RFP. However, in order to participate in the Ticket to Work program, the one-stop delivery system must enter into an

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agreement with the Commissioner to be an EN and must maintain compliance with general and specific selection criteria as described in §411.315 in order to remain an EN.

(e) Organizations administering Vocational Rehabilitation Services Projects for American Indians with Disabilities authorized under section 121 of part C of title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 741), may participate in the Ticket to Work program as ENs and do not need to respond to the RFP. However, in order to participate in the Ticket to Work program, the organization administering the project must enter into an agreement with the Commissioner to be an EN and must maintain compliance with general and specific selection criteria as described in §411.315 in order to remain an EN.

[66 FR 67420, Dec. 28, 2001, as amended at 73 FR 29344, May 20, 2008]

### **§411.315 What are the minimum qualifications necessary to be an EN?**

To serve as an EN under the Ticket to Work program, an entity must meet and maintain compliance with both general selection criteria and specific selection criteria.

(a) The general criteria include:

(1) having systems in place to protect the confidentiality of personal information about beneficiaries seeking or receiving services;

(2) being accessible, both physically and programmatically, to beneficiaries seeking or receiving services (examples of being programmatically accessible include the capability of making documents and literature available in alternate media including Braille, recorded formats, enlarged print, and electronic media; and insuring that data systems available to clients are fully accessible for independent use by persons with disabilities);

(3) not discriminating in the provision of services based on a beneficiary's age, gender, race, color, creed, or national origin;

(4) having adequate resources to perform the activities required under the agreement with us or the ability to obtain them;

(5) complying with the terms and conditions in the agreement with us,